CHAPTER 7

DRUG COURT, FRIENDSHIP, DOIN’ IT, SONGWRITING, AND SEAN & KARI, THE COUPLE.

Kari lost her first love to drugs... and before that she was anti drug... but she was inconsolable and her mother took her to a doctor and he prescibed her xanax... at her mother's suggestion... and she took to it very quickly. She took them too often and her mother was taking half of her script... and the girl I had known for three years already was calling me in all kinds of states, asking me if I could find pills.. then calling me days later and apologizing... saying that she was just so sad over Ned... that she wanted to be sober again... but she was already addicted... so quickly... and so it began... 2006... 2007... 2008... all a blur of her calling me in various states... asking me if I could find pills... which I never did... and then calling me later and apologizing and saying she was done and HATED the pills and how stupid they made her! NO MORE!... over and over... and I didn't get it. I didn't understand. I wanted her to be better.

Then 2009. She was busted for writing over 250 fake scripts... but her mother got her a good lawyer and she got off with "drug court"... and she called me first when she finally got home from the rehab. She apologized for the last three years. She said it all started when Ned died and she was given pills for the first time and she really felt like she needed them, but they hurt her... she was worried back in 2009 that the xanax had done irreparable damage to her brain... I told her they weren't that bad... that she was young and her brain was a wonder of nature ... she would be ok.

She had daily classes and meetings she had to go to for a year... and every time she was home, she would call me and tell me about her progress. She wanted to see me, and I hadn't been to see her for a while... but we had always been lovers... that was always there. But this time she asked me if we could be friends. For a while at least. I think her counselor warned her against being in sexual relationships for a while. Because I remember her quoting the same thing when we watched that movie with Sandra Bullock... how they had to keep a plant alive, for a year, then a pet for a year... then after that they would be ready to possibly have a relationship... I was a little let down by this at first. But it was like a stroke of genius... I realized that even without the hot love, she was a wonderful, brainy, talented person... and just FUN. I liked her and she listened to everything I said and remembered it all... for years she did that. And I'd hear her talking to a friend of hers and say something that I know came from me... "You know, most people don't know this" she said, "But WOMEN have more erectile tissue than men! Yea! I know!" as she looked over at me and winked....

And we started doing the thing that we loved the most... writing and recording music together. We wrote a bunch of songs about drug addiction and recovery, even though I wasn't a member of that club yet, I had no problem writing those with her, because it was something she got from me. I told her that every songwriter is a folk singer... and she looked at me funny... and I said THINK about it! You think of Bob Dylan or Pete Seeger... but folk music is just people writing about their own experiences... and it could be anything... anything that you think is important or interesting... or insightful... Like SUBLIME! They wrote that song about the LA Riots and all the looting, and that's how they got all their band gear... and that REALLY happened.. those fuckers were hardcore! They were writing about their life and the experiences they'd had at that time... and it doesn't sound like Bob Dylan... but it's music by the Folks who lived it... it's FOLK music... and now she was writing about what was on her mind and what she thought was important... and I knew it would be good.

The first one we did was Bad Damage... our first song that we wrote and played together. It was based on what she feared... the bad damage that she'd done to herself... And she wrote the lyrics on her own... but nearly every song after that we collaborated on lyrics... this was our first song, after all... the formula hadn't been established yet. We did another song and that one turned out great, too!

We were laying in her bed, just as two friends after a good night of making our music and she was in a good mood. I said that I really saw the change in her. That the last three years had been so confusing for me... I didn't understand her grief over Ned... the reason was, when we first met, she told me about Ned, and she said how serious they were. But when I asked her what happened with him, she didn't want to say that he became a meth cook, flaked out and got really hostile when she wouldn't help him buy a crate of SUDAFED at Walmart... and that she hadn't seen him since... so she said "he died... but I don't want to talk about it"... and changed the subject... so I thought Ned had been dead for SIX years... but in fact, he died three years LATER, which is kind of fucked up, I know... and that was the time when all the craziness started... And she was telling me the truth that she was freaking out over Ned... but the first THREE years we were together, she didn't seem phased by it?!... Because he was only PRETEND dead... and now he was REALLY dead!! what a tangled web!

Kari had a habit of omitting things... but later she tried many times to tell me in her own way... she put Neds memorial CD on my desk where it sat for 6 years!!! With his birth and death dates... and I NEVER did the math!!! I just assumed whatever she told me was the truth... but as we sat there on her bed, I said "I'm so proud of you. Being a drug addict did not look good on you. You're better than that" and I didn't notice her fuming... as I lay there... and then I heard

"Did you just call me a drug addict??"

"Um... yea? I mean... I though they made you ad"-

"Can you please leave?... NOW?"

So yea. She kicked me out for calling her the obvious. And I didn't hear from her for a MONTH... until finally she called me back and apologized.

She said "You know what we all did today?"

and I said "I don't know... admitted your drug addicts?" "SCREW YOU!"

"Was i right?"

"yes".

....and so I came by again for a recording session and it went great. We did another great song and it was fun... but it felt a little strange. I couldn't put my finger on it. A few days later she called and we talked and she said

"so... later on after we record another awesome song that we wrote... hmm... maybe... you wanna do it?"

and I said "Do it? What's that? what are you suggesting??"

"DO IT!"

"OH! You mean HAVE SEX?!?!"

"Yea... I don't know if you noticed, but I was kind of climbing the walls last time... and you've been so sweet... you've been a great friend... but I never thought you would last this long and yea! I need to do it! "

"hahahah! You're so funny... you're like a 14 year old boy! DO IT!? Who says that?"

"stop it!"

"MMMMM... you vant to make zee looove??"

"Quit Sean"...

"Zee beast with TWO BACKS. mmm YES LET'S DOOO EEET!"

"Stop it I changed my mind! I don't wanna do it!"

"You vimmen always say no, but your eyes say DO EET!"

"Ok... get over here before I change my mind!"

So... our little friend-zone period was over, but we always stayed friends... it was something I cherished... almost as much as her breaking down and asking me for sex in her brash, tomboy way! lol.

She was sharp, super cute, talented... but I wondered after all this time... 6 years... who I really was to her. We were best friends... we were olympic class lovers... isn't that what everyone wants? Shouldn't that GO somewhere? Who was I to her? I thought about it... then said "fuck it"... I'm the guy who's coming over to record music with an angel that's my best friend... and then we're gonna DO IT!!... I can't complain.

This is the actual video SHE made for the first song we recorded on our own. Bad Damage. She made the video for a group just like this one... she made it one day, using her phone and the slide show on her computer. I never saw it while she was

alive... I found it after. And of course it made me happy to see she thought it important to feature so many pictures of us... being in young widow's support groups, I hear a lot of things. People timidly ask if after their spouse died, did people find out some horrible things... and TONS of people said yes... and I worried that there might be something she said that was mean or insulting to me... but she was always sweet... she talked me up. If we had a problem, we dealt with it and she didn't take her problems to her friends... some of her friends said it kind of irked them, how happy and in love she always acted... like it wasn't real. But we spent many years getting to know each other better than we knew anyone else in this world... and after all those years, we were still terribly hot for each other... very happy, very in love, and forever was the only measure of time we talked about... and as many times as she said she looked forward to spending her whole life with me, I really pictured something a lot longer... one thing she said to me many times, was "I don't think I could bury you." "Oh yea? You think you're going to outlive me then?" "Sean, you're 16 years older than me, and while everyone STILL says you look younger than me, the women in my family live to be 100! That means I'm gonna spend a lot of years alone... and I don't want to." "so what are you saying?"

"I'm saying that when you go, I'm gonna be ten minutes behind you. I went through this once, and it was bad enough. I can't imagine doing it again... not after all this... "

"Baby... it's part of life... you might find you have a lot to live for in the time between now and then... kids... grandkids... Don't you want to be grandma Kari? That brash cool old grandma that cusses and doesn't take any shit from anyone! I hope I get to see grandma Kari..."

"Then we better get busy! One year clean. We get one year clean, and then we start our family."

"You're the only woman that's ever said that to me that I didn't want to run away from... I'm excited at the thought of our amazing little baby"...

"Yea... she'll be a red head, and have a voice that can break glass! And of course, a master musician... we'll have our own superbaby!"

"That's what I picture. But yea, we gotta get busy quick. I don't want our kid getting asked why her grandpa always picks her up... I hate the idea of you having to push out a kid with a head as big as mine... I'm going to apologize for that in advance."

"shit, I want a c-section... fuck all that!"

"Yea... just so you know... there's nothing in this world that could keep me from being hot for you."

"are you sure? I worry that with my teeth problems, I'm gonna have to have false teeth at some point... that won't turn you off?"

"The other day I was thinking about this for the longest time while I was driving"

"About me having false teeth??"

"NO! That's nothing... I was thinking I would love you even if you had a penis! haha... I'm REALLY glad that you don't... there was this program on NPR and this girl was apparently very attractive and had both sets of genitals... and her husband was straight... and he loved her a lot... I thought about it for a while... and in your case... it wouldn't be a deal breaker... just to put it in perspective... BUT I'M SO GLAD you don't..."

"Aww... that's the sweetest thing you've ever said! I feel better."

"only if it wasn't bigger than mine... a cute little dangler would be ok... just a little cherubic wiener... you know... a little angel pecker..."

"Wow, you really gave this some thought!”

CHAPTER 8

BIRTHDAY SURPRISES AND SECRETS, THE OWL, THE PILLS, THE QUILT, AND THE MOONDOTS.

All the time, the years, our lives and the songs went ticking by...

and now it was 2011. 8 years after we me and 2 years after her bust and drug court, and her house arrest, in-house probation and the blossoming of first our friendship, then our sexual relationship… also, we started our songwriting together, to have a healthy outlet for our energy and inspiration, as we had a lot... and Kari

showed herself to be an awesome talent… writing as well as singing better than anyone I'd ever heard. She had her years of country, so she could lilt, with that pure silky quality, and she could belt! With a soulful depth to beat all… She had been sober for a long time! She had just graduated from drug court and my birthday was coming up. She asked me if I wanted to come over to celebrate her graduating and my birthday. I said definitely! I had come to really love our times together and when she was sober, we were a very compatible couple. We were a COUPLE… f-buddies, or FWB. We could relax around each other… we could be critical and the other not get upset (mostly, lol). She was beautiful and her mind and voice and body were all in great form. She was a goddess to me, but I didn't know after all this time what she really thought about me! It drove me crazy…

August 14th 2011 (my birthday).

I arrived at her house after dark, so it was a little late. She gave me a hug and a kiss… off to a good start. She said "I have some surprises for you"… "oh yea?" "yes… I can't wait".

I had brought some Bud Light Lime, even though she had not drank it for a while, but I still liked it and wanted to remind her of our first years together… and she asked me if I could bring something fun to party with, as she had been sober for something like 8 months. I brought a few pain pills that I got at the bar and of course my guitars and pedal effects.

She led me out to the barn, where she had the golf cart they used to get to and fro over their large parcel of land out there. We both got in and she drove for a few minutes, in the dark moonlit night, out through the fields on the trail they had made years ago to run the dogs and get to the various areas, and came to a clearing where there was lots of tall grass… she pulled out a large, old, hand-made quilt and laid it on the grass.

The moon was huge and bright and lit up the field with seemingly brilliant white light. We lay down and looked up at the sky and sipped the girly beers… I pulled out the tiny pills that I had paid dearly for… "what are those?" "I don't know, but they're supposed to be good… they're expensive at least!" so I popped mine and she chewed hers up… and we lay there cuddling and touching and stroking each others hair… and then we kissed… and my stomach had butterflies again, like in the old days… and the butterflies were going crazy! They were absolutely NUTS! And then I jumped up and walked a few feet away and hurled everything I had eaten that day in one go! And then I heaved a few times… then I came back and had a few sips of beer. "What happened?" "I don't know… it just came on all of a sud"- and then she was up… running a few feet in the other direction and the SAME THING happened, although not as quickly… she panted for a while… said she was ok… and then "wait… nope"… although it was kind of cute when she did it… somehow! "What the fuck!" she said… "what were those?"

"I'm not sure… we can look them up on your phone, maybe?"

She looked them up and it turned out they were Dilaudid! Basically one of the most powerful opiates sold in pill form! After the yakking incident, our stomachs calmed down and the opiates made us warm and fuzzy and a little bit sweaty, but we managed to get through some clumsy love-making, in spite of the sexual side-effects of the pills... it took a little time and coaxing, but when I was with Kari, I was relaxed and completely aroused... in body and mind. Anything was possible with her.

We lay on the quilt looking up at the sky, naked and wrapped in the quilt to keep the bugs off... and unable to keep our bodies from touching... our hands from stroking... just feeling as blissful as could be.

The moon was so bright... as we lay there with the sound of the frogs and the creatures of the night keeping us company... Kari sat up suddenly and said “I hear my friend!”

“What do you mean?”

She stood up, her beautiful naked curves showing in the moonlight... and yelled out “WHOOO HA WHOOO”... and off in the distance a barn owl called back to her.

“Did you hear?”

“Aww... that’s so cool”

“WHOOO HA WHOOOOO!!!”

And he called back.

“You better be careful... you’re gonna get his hopes up!”

“Oh yea?”

“Yea... he might think there’s some incredibly hot chick over here.”

“Oh?”

“Yea... he’s probably thinking there’s some super hot chick here, who’s talented, with an incredible body... beautiful big owl eyes. A sweet owl face, who would give him the best birthday party in the woods he’s ever had.... Maybe even the love of his life.”

“Yea? He thinks that?”

“yea... but what does he know, he’s just a dumb owl.”

She smacked me on the leg and smiled... and leaned in for a deep long kiss.

“whoo whoo” I whispered... like an out of breath, extremely aroused owl.

She said “I have another surprise for you...”

“you’re kidding... you mean there’s more? You know, this was the best birthday ever in my life, so far. I-... thank you.”

I was going to say “I love you”... but I didn’t. We cuddled a little longer then got dressed and took the ride back to the bunkhouse. We walked inside and the recording rig was set up and she pulled out a piece of paper and on it was the title “Secrets”.

It was a song... for me. We had done many songs, and some were involving me in the lyrics, some were certainly about Ned, as he was still a fixture in her mind, but we had collaborated on so many, it was hard to say who meant what, and it always seemed a romantic notion to write songs together about each other... but this song told the story of the time when we were just friends, some time back, and the sexual tension that was there the whole time... I thought it was purely a one-sided thing! Until she asked me to come over and "DO IT"...

The only thing missing, as was missing from the other songs we wrote, was love. It wasn’t a love song. In fact, it was a rockin’ SEX song, which I guess I’ll take! It even goes as far as to say “you’re making me so infatuated... but I think love is overrated!”

Fair enough... I was kinda glad I didn’t say it earlier... and it being my birthday, she would have felt some obligation to say it back to me... I decided she would have to say it... I would never cave to pressure. It was her ball game, and we both knew it!

So we worked on the song tirelessly from about 10PM to 3:30AM... I tried to throw down some rhythm parts and lead parts, but they were a little trite and uninspired... but all in all, it was a decent song with good music that we wrote and her sexy-ass voice singing those words about us. I couldn’t ask for a better birthday, even if I spent almost six hours working on my present... and then later on, after the Dilauded had worn off mostly, we had some more incredible sexy-time, very uninhibited and with her a lot more involved in foreplay... enjoying my body, something that wasn’t so much a part of our dance up ‘til this point. I pointed this out to her... “you mean I never DID THAT before? huh... maybe I was shy... I love DOING THAT!”

(I cleaned up the language a LOT! LOL)... Afterward I put my hand on her breast and felt her heart... I put my head there and listened to it pounding away as she stroked my hair.... as the events of the evening were etched indelibly in my heart-drive...

The song was too big to mix on her little computer. We agreed to come back to it and somehow get it on my pro-tools system at my house, where I had a big-ass MAC system that could throw around 24 tracks like they were nothing... but that never happened... and after a while, we forgot the song even existed... so many other songs were done and this night’s song just somehow slipped our minds. I found it recently, as I was going through her things... her computer hard drive had it hidden in another file for another song... and I looked at it and wondered what it was... “Secret”... sounds like something I needed to hear!

I actually had little memory of doing it, after all the other songs we did... so I checked the date on the pro-tools file and did a double-take “oh my god!” and the memories came flooding back! I remembered the night, the golf cart ride and the

sexy time... but the song had slipped my mind for over 8 years! I quickly tried to mix it on her computer and quickly realized the reason it never was mixed was because it was TOO huge of a file... so I bounced the whole file over to a thumb drive and onto the MAC... and a new Kari Jo song was born!

Everyone was amazed to hear the story and the new song that came from it. It was my birthday present from happier times... finally coming to me. Thank you Kari, for this night, this song, and the love that we made. We were both in love, but hadn’t dared to say it yet.

Kari and Sean - Secrets (Aug 14 2011)